



SEATTLE CITY COUNCIL | DISTRICT 3

COUNCILMEMBER KSHAMA SAWANT

The Anti-Trump, Immigrant Rights Movement Must Stand in Solidarity with the Cantwell Six

Statement by Seattle City Councilmember Kshama Sawant (District 3), January 30, 2020:

My Council office and I, along with Socialist Alternative, stand in full solidarity with the Cantwell Six.

Trump's border concentration camps, the widespread abuse by US authorities of immigrant and refugees who are fleeing oppression in their home countries, and his policy of family separation are horrific and shameful. The Cantwell Six are among those courageously fighting in solidarity with immigrant rights movements.

For five weeks, the Cantwell Six – Dr. Howard Gale, Jennifer Gosar, Elizabeth Graham, M.Ed., Nikita Minkin, Nick Peda, and Jessie Yadlowsky – persistently went to Democratic Senator Maria Cantwell's Seattle office, requesting a discussion about President Trump's border atrocities. They repeatedly urged her to take a more active and public role in calling for the end of the ongoing abuses of immigrants at United States detention camps.

It is unfortunate that Senator Cantwell not only rebuffed the six activists, but has also ignored similar calls from community members all over the state. Instead, disgracefully, Senator Cantwell's office had the six peaceful community members arrested.

According to the Cantwell Six, it was Cantwell's Washington state director who called the police to have them removed. Another of her staff members said, "No one will know what you did, no one will care."

This arrest of the activists comes after Cantwell's June vote for a Senate funding measure that stripped out meaningful safeguards against immigrant abuse.

Today (Thursday, January 30) the Cantwell Six begin their trial in federal court. My office will be present in the courtroom at the beginning of the trial, in solidarity with the defendants. I call on the federal judge overseeing the trial to dismiss all charges against the Cantwell Six. The crimes are committed not by the Cantwell six, but by a brutal system that is denying basic human rights to thousands at the border.

Elected officials who claim to be opposing Trump cannot just present lip service. They need to demonstrate through action, by speaking out publicly, holding town hall meetings, and using their elected office to demand that funding for the detention and deportation of refugees and asylum seekers be cut off.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K Sawant', with a stylized, cursive script.

Kshama Sawant
Seattle City Council, District 3